

## **Covid Update Narrative March 1, 2021**

Town Administrator Jim Boudreau said the recently approved, one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine could be a “game changer” in terms of getting people vaccinated. Plans are to have 20 million doses available in March and 100 million by the summer.

Boudreau and Supt. of Schools William Burkhead are spearheading an effort with the help of state Sen. Patrick O’Connor and state Rep. Patrick Kearney to have the first doses of the J&J vaccine allotted to cities and towns to vaccinate teachers. He said the vaccines would be administered in the same manner as was done for public safety personnel and first responders. This would help alleviate concerns and help get teachers back in the classroom fulltime.

Boudreau reminds residents that the state Covid vaccination program is in Phase 2, Step 2, meaning that those age 65 and older are eligible as well as those with two or more co-morbidities. Check [mass.gov/covid](https://mass.gov/covid) for more details.

The Marshfield fairgrounds is a regional vaccination site. You must sign up on the state website. Check back regularly for updates. The state mass vaccination sites’ appointment availability at Gillette and Fenway Park are updated on Thursdays.

Anyone having a hard time getting an appointment, can call the state help line at 2-1-1 or the Scituate Senior Center at 781-545-8722.

Boudreau acknowledges that people are frustrated because they cannot get appointments. He said the problem is not with the state Covid map but with the lack of vaccine. For example, last week, 50,000 appointments opened up, but there are more than 1 million people in Phase 2, Step 2.

He said with the J&J vaccine coming out, the number of vaccinations administered should ramp up.

Boudreau said the town had 22 new Covid cases over the past week; that is down from 32 the previous week. The town’s positivity rate is 2.19 percent over the last 14 days. Scituate is still in the “yellow” on the state positivity map.

The state has removed capacity restrictions from restaurants. However, they must maintain social distancing of 6 feet between tables, tables are limited to 6 people with a 90-minute time limit.

Gyms and indoor centers can reopen at 50 percent capacity. Check [mass.gov/covid](https://mass.gov/covid) for more details.

If the Covid numbers continue to go down, the state will allow limited seating at Fenway Park and the TD Garden starting March 22.

In other news, non-resident and Humarock beach stickers have sold out. Residents can purchase beach stickers at town hall or online.

Boudreau noted that tonight (March 1), temperatures are plummeting meaning that puddles and wet spots will freeze overnight. He urged residents to use caution.

He said the survey about what to do with the Harbor Community Building (former Pier 44) will stay online until the end of the week.

There are signs with QR codes outside Town Hall, the library, and the community center. By scanning in the QR code, a resident can respond to the survey on their phone.

The Cole Parkway pilings project is in full swing and should be finished by the start of the boating season. The new system will allow the docks to remain in place over the winter.

The Cedar Point sewer project is moving along. Boudreau urged residents to avoid the area as it is very congested.

The Senior Center is nearing completion. The furniture is being delivered. Temporary occupancy by staff will be allowed this week. The center, depending on Covid, is expected to be open by April 1. Landscaping has to wait until spring.

Supt. Burkhead said the schools had five Covid cases last week for a total of 152 since the start of the school year.

In a special School Committee meeting tonight (March 1), the school board is expected to vote on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Scituate Teachers Association regarding the return to school Wednesday. During the March 8 School Committee meeting, the focus will be on the Safe and Strong Back to School framework plan.

For Read Across America Week, the focus has changed from Dr. Suess to joining in being a country of diverse readers, with differences and similarities.

Burkhead gave a shout-out to Boudreau for the plans presented to local legislators and the governor's office to get the educators and support staff vaccinated in this phase.

Select person Maura Curran reminded residents to continue to follow Covid safety protocols and to support local retailers, businesses and restaurants.

She noted that SANDS Helps ([sandshelps.org](https://sandshelps.org)) still has a Covid grant available.